

CIA-IR-23

CIA-IR-23  
Showered by to Kathy  
Tyner; she had no  
problem with doc; kept  
copy for her files.

**DRAFT****Memorandum**

February 9, 1998

CIA HAS BEEN ADVISED TO  
DECLASSIFY THIS DOCUMENT  
FOR RELEASE OF CIA INFORMATION  
IN THIS DOCUMENT

To: Jeremy Gunn  
Executive Director

cc: Bob Skwirot  
CIA Coordinator

From: Michelle Combs  
Special Assistant for Research and Review

Subject: CIA-IR-23 Watch Reports of the United States Intelligence Board

In response to informal request CIA-IR-23, CIA has searched the records of the National Intelligence Program Evaluation Staff (NIPE), including the United States Intelligence Board Watch Reports, action memorandums, meeting minutes, and chronological files, for the period January 1963 to May 1964 for information relating to the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

The search produced eight United States Intelligence Board Watch Reports from the period 27 November 1963 - 27 May 1964. I have reviewed these eight documents, consisting of 14 pages, and have marked portions of six reports as assassination records: 27 November 1963, 24 December 1963, 22 January 1964, 22 April 1964, 29 April 1964, and 20 May 1964.

Like the President's Intelligence Checklist and the President's Daily Brief, these documents cover multiple topics. I recommend that the portions of the document not deemed related to the Kennedy assassination be declared NBR and redacted.

Once the six marked reports have been included for processing as assassination records, this response is complete.

**DRAFT**

WS  
24-2-98  
advised  
Michelle Combs  
25-2-98

DECLASSIFIED  
RELEASE OF INFORMATION  
IN THIS DOCUMENT

To: Barry

From: Michelle

Re: Watch Committee Reports

Barry,

I read through the reports and marked paragraphs relevant to the assassination in six of the eight reports. The Board almost certainly will want these relevant paragraphs released in full. Given that these six reports constitute only eleven total pages and that the information in them is now consigned to the pages of history, it would be nice to have the entire reports reviewed for release. If this creates a sensitivity or speed-in-processing problem, see the attached draft memo. I don't know if Jeremy will go for the memo as a full response to CIA-IR-23. If CIA will not release the six reports with reasonable redactions, would you check with Kathy Dyer to see if my memo is unclassified. Let me know.

*Michelle*

**TOP SECRET**AFNINDC, TSC-796-63  
Hq., USAFWATCH REPORT  
of the  
UNITED STATES INTELLIGENCE BOARD

No. 692

27 November 1963

Conclusion

No Communist Bloc country intends to initiate direct military action in the immediate future. (TOP SECRET) [REDACTED]

I. Bloc International Developments

The Soviet Bloc does not appear to have taken any new initiatives in the past few days, and it has already issued several unofficial but guardedly hopeful comments. Soviet Bloc news media continue to reflect Moscow's concern lest a dangerous controversy result from allegations that Oswald's acts were motivated by his Marxist political orientation. (CONFIDENTIAL)

The Sino-Soviet dispute continues to be treated with restraint by the USSR, while the Chinese demonstrate no signs of moderating their public polemics against Soviet policies. (CONFIDENTIAL)

II. Soviet Bloc Military Developments

We have discerned no Soviet or Eastern European Satellite military reaction to the assassination of President Kennedy. A relatively low level of training, considered normal for this season, appears to be continuing. (SECRET)

III. Critical Areas

1. Berlin and Germany: The Soviet note of 21 November on Autobahn procedures together with the Soviet oral statement of 16 November appeared designed to end the previous round of incidents but at the same time reasserted a Soviet claim to determine Autobahn procedures. Since the underlying issue remains unresolved, the new Soviet statement could serve as the starting point for a renewal of harassment. (SECRET)

2. Cuba: The concentration of tanks and self-propelled assault guns noted in photography of 23 and 24 November at the Loma de Tierra and Managua military camps near Havana apparently is in preparation for the 1 January celebration of the

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fifth anniversary of Castro's revolution. Similar preparations were noted last December for this purpose. (SECRET)

3. Sino-Indian Border Conflict: We have noted no significant new developments. (CONFIDENTIAL)

4. Vietnam: The accelerated tempo of Viet Cong activity continues. Although confirmed figures on North Vietnamese military infiltration into South Vietnam remain considerably below those of last year, newly acquired reports from prisoners are continuing to raise the 1963 totals, and we believe that additional infiltrators will be confirmed as further reports are received. (SECRET)

A renewed North Vietnamese propaganda campaign for the neutralization of South Vietnam appears to be under way, with Chinese Communist and Soviet support. For the first time in nearly a year, the Communist-sponsored National Front for the Liberation of South Vietnam reiterated its support for an international guarantee of Cambodia, Laos and South Vietnam, in line with the proposal of Cambodian Premier Sihanouk. North Vietnamese insistence on the withdrawal of US forces indicates that Hanoi is not seriously interested in a settlement at this time except on its own terms. The North Vietnamese premier reportedly professes to see signs of war weariness among the American people and says his government intends to keep up the pressure in South Vietnam. (SECRET) [REDACTED]

5. Laos: The "cease-fire" between the neutralists and the Pathet Lao in the Plaine des Jarres area has proved ineffective and both sides have continued sporadic artillery firing in the area. Meanwhile, the neutralists have continued their limited offensive in the Vang Vieng-Ban Namone area along Route 13 north of Vientiane with apparent success. Pathet Lao units reportedly moved to the west of Route 13 and possibly are regrouping for a counterattack.. (SECRET)

There are few signs that the Communists are prepared to make any significant concessions toward an agreement. While they appear to be seeking talks between Souvanna and Souphanouvong, they have flatly rejected the establishment of joint patrols to maintain the cease-fire. Their principal objective apparently is to split the Kong Le forces from collaboration with the FAR. (CONFIDENTIAL)

6. Cambodia: Peiping's reaction to Sihanouk's accusations of US subversion and to the suspension of US aid to Cambodia has been basically cautious, despite statements of all-out Chinese support against any US-supported invasion of Cambodia. Peiping's public statements have dealt only with the contingency of armed attack and have not indicated its attitude toward subversive activity across Cambodia's borders. Peiping and Hanoi have made the most of the situation by condemning alleged US violations of the 1954 Geneva Agreements and declaring their firm support for Cambodian "independence and neutrality." (CONFIDENTIAL)

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**TOP SECRET**AFNINDC, TSC-860-63  
Hq., USAFWATCH REPORT  
of the  
UNITED STATES INTELLIGENCE BOARD

No. 696

24 December 1963

Conclusion

No Communist Bloc country intends to initiate direct military action in the immediate future. (TOP SECRET) [REDACTED]

Bloc International Developments

The Soviets, while attempting to assess the new leadership in the US since the assassination of President Kennedy, have avoided raising new frictions in Soviet-US relations. They have simultaneously been devoting considerable attention to their domestic economic problems and to intra-bloc relations. However, we have noted no significant alteration in their major foreign policy goals vis-a-vis the West and we note that Khrushchev has recently reaffirmed Soviet support for "national liberation" movements and has reiterated Soviet "warnings" against a US attack on Cuba. (SECRET)

Soviet Bloc Military Developments

A further analysis of the Soviet 1964-65 plan and related information leads us to believe that the chemical program will have a limited but significant effect on defense procurement during the next two years. (SECRET)

Critical Areas

1. Berlin and Germany: The possibility continues of incidents arising from the large number of West Berliners visiting East Berlin during the holidays. Increased numbers of East German security and military units have been noted along the Wall in what appears to be precautionary measures. (SECRET)
2. Cuba: No significant change in the status of Soviet forces in Cuba has been noted during the past week. (SECRET)

The Soviet cargo ship Krasnoye Znamya, which arrived at Mariel around 15 December, reportedly unloaded ammunition. (SECRET) [REDACTED]

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**TOP SECRET**AFNINDC, TSC-56-64  
Hq., USAFWATCH REPORT  
of the  
UNITED STATES INTELLIGENCE BOARD

No. 700

22 January 1964

Conclusion

No Communist Bloc country intends to initiate direct military action in the immediate future. (TOP SECRET) [REDACTED]

Bloc International Developments

Sino-Soviet Bloc policy developments are included in the relevant sections below. (CONFIDENTIAL)

Soviet Bloc Military Developments

Bloc ground force activity continues to reflect winter training on a scale generally comparable with that noted last year at this time. The first restriction this year on travel of the Allied Military Liaison Missions in East Germany has been imposed for the period 19-26 January in an area west of Berlin which includes the Letzlinger Heide-Elbe River North training areas. The restriction is probably intended to screen an East German field exercise, possibly involving elements of both military districts. (SECRET)

Critical Areas

1. Berlin and Germany: Ulbricht's latest proposal for a nuclear-free Germany, supplementing Khrushchev's end-of-the-year world-wide peace proposal, appears to be largely a propaganda play to boost East Germany's political status. The East German regime has kept open negotiations on a new pass agreement and the prospect is for protracted and difficult talks. The East Germans have already tried to expand the scope of the talks and, as part of their negotiating position, have posed conditions they know to be unacceptable to the West Berlin Senat. The Communists will want to keep the negotiations alive, however, if only to secure tacit Western acceptance of the principle of direct talks between the Senat and East Germans. (SECRET)

The rotation of a US battalion to and from Berlin, concluded on 16 January, brought no Soviet or East German interference. (CONFIDENTIAL)

2. Cuba: There has been no significant change in the status of Soviet forces in Cuba. (SECRET)

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Khrushchev on 17 January at Kalinin followed a strong condemnation of the US position in Panama with a pointed reference to the US naval base at Guantanamo as "Cuban soil" that "must belong to Cuba." He again reiterated Soviet support for Castro's "five points," strongly stated Soviet willingness to defend Cuba and emphasized that President Kennedy's "no-invasion" pledge was binding on the new US administration. While these remarks may have been primarily designed to reassure Castro, these repeated public statements of support tend to make the Soviet commitment to Cuba more binding. (CONFIDENTIAL)

3. Communist China: The authoritative Chinese Communist newspaper, People's Daily, has echoed Mao Tse-tung's 12 January call for a global struggle on the broadest possible scale against "US imperialist aggression." People's Daily said all forces in the world including the American people but excluding "US imperialism and its lackeys" should form the united front. As a further reflection of Communist China's announced implacable hostility toward the United States, Peiping is conducting a protest campaign against US actions in Panama which now rivals and may exceed in magnitude and intensity a similar campaign against the US during the Cuban crisis. While it is less intense than at the time of the American landing in Lebanon in 1958, it appears to be part of a deliberate program to generate widespread anti-US hostility among the Chinese population. (CONFIDENTIAL)

4. Vietnam: Viet Cong armed attacks continue at a reduced level. The Communists, however, are sustaining a high level of harassing and terrorist activity aimed at sapping the resistance of the rural population and paramilitary forces. The focus of Viet Cong activity remains the delta, but we note that the slow but gradual buildup of Viet Cong numerical and organizational strength is also continuing in the Communist Military Region V, the northernmost region of South Vietnam. The scale of this buildup, in contrast to the low level of Viet Cong activity in this area, suggests a future stepup of Viet Cong attacks in the north. (SECRET)

At the second Congress of the Communist-sponsored Liberation Front, held in early January, the chairman stated that the civil war had "entered a new and brilliant phase," but continued to caution that the struggle would be "protracted." (CONFIDENTIAL)

The military junta continues to be disturbed over talk of a neutralist solution for South Vietnam. Reports of impending French recognition of Communist China have apparently also caused a stir in South Vietnamese official circles. (CONFIDENTIAL)

5. Laos: Action is continuing in the Na Kay area north of Nhommarath. Communist forces appear to have made some further gains west of Kham Keut although the situation in the Na Kay plateau area apparently remains generally unchanged.

**TOP SECRET**AFNINDC, TSC-76-64  
Hq., USAFWATCH REPORT  
of the  
UNITED STATES INTELLIGENCE BOARD

No. 701

29 January 1964

Conclusion

No Communist Bloc country intends to initiate direct military action in the immediate future. (TOP SECRET) [REDACTED]

Bloc International Developments

Soviet Bloc developments are included in relevant sections below. (CONFIDENTIAL)

Critical Areas

1. Berlin and Germany: The Soviet shutdown of a USAF T-39 over East Germany on 28 January occurred when the US plane became lost during a routine instrument training flight over West Germany. This is the first such shutdown of an Allied aircraft over East Germany since 1953, although there have been numerous inadvertent overflight violations in the interim. The 28 January incident followed a Soviet warning on 25 January that US violations of the air corridors would "lead to hard, undesirable consequences." The incident indicates at least continued Soviet sensitivity both to border violations by Western aircraft and to any appearance of Soviet weakness on the German scene. (SECRET)

2. Cuba: There has been no significant change in the status of Soviet forces in Cuba during the past week. (SECRET)

The 22 January Soviet-Cuban communique reiterated previously stated Soviet commitments to defend Cuba in the event of an invasion by the United States. Mention of Marshals Malinovskiy and Grechko, as well as Cuban military personnel, among the participants in the Soviet-Cuban talks makes it a virtual certainty that military matters were discussed. (SECRET)

3. Vietnam: Viet Cong activity has increased somewhat, notably in the intensity of armed attacks, but terrorism continues to comprise the bulk of their effort to control the population. The situation in the Mekong delta and certain other areas remains critical, and the government is in a race against time to devise effective counter-insurgency measures. However, in several provinces where able province chiefs have been recently installed and military security achieved, popular morale appears to have improved. (SECRET)

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**TOP SECRET**AFNINDC, TSC-298-64  
Hq., USAFWATCH REPORT  
of the  
UNITED STATES INTELLIGENCE BOARD

No. 713

22 April 1964

Conclusions

No Communist country intends to initiate direct military action in the immediate future against the United States, its overseas forces or its Allies. (TOP SECRET) [REDACTED]

Laos: The internal situation remains highly unstable. The situation is favorable for Communist gains, but we have thus far discerned no Communist military reaction. (TOP SECRET) [REDACTED]

Bloc International Developments

The celebration this week of Khrushchev's 70th birthday provided a platform for the other Soviet and pro-Soviet East European leaders to declare their support for Khrushchev's policies and program. There appears to be no serious domestic challenge to his position and he has demonstrated a clear intention to continue to carry his full burdens of leadership. Khrushchev's announcement on 20 April of a cut in Soviet production of fissionable materials also suggests that he intends to continue policies designed to convey a sense of reduced East-West tensions. (CONFIDENTIAL)

Reports from refugees who arrived in Hong Kong from Sinkiang Province of China on 12 April provide evidence that the Chinese Communists have a systematic program for resettling local inhabitants inland along the entire length of at least the Sinkiang frontier and have established a 20-mile deep security zone. The refugees' report of substantial Chinese troop reinforcements to Sinkiang, however, has not been confirmed by available evidence. (SECRET)

Critical Areas

1. Cuba: Fidel Castro's 19 April speech on the third anniversary of the Bay of Pigs and President Dorticos' speech the following day appear to mark the initiation of a new Cuban diplomatic offensive against the US. The Cuban notes of 21 April indicate that continued US overflights and US occupancy of Guantanamo will be the chief targets of this diplomatic drive. Castro singled out alleged US provocations

**TOP SECRET**

**TOP SECRET**

22 April 1964

at the Guantanamo naval base for special treatment and the next day Dorticos condemned continuing violations of Cuban air space. Castro stated that Cuba refused to sanction or legalize these provocations and overflights and warned that the limits of patience are being "dangerously violated." Fidel indicated a willingness to utilize the forum of international opinion to publicize these provocations, but at the same time called for increased combat preparedness of his military forces to resist "physical aggressions" against Cuba "cost what it will and come what may." (CONFIDENTIAL)

A Cuban defector who had been assigned to a SAM complex in Pinar del Rio Province has reported that an all-Cuban crew was to be selected in May for an actual firing of a surface-to-air missile against a drone target. He stated that if the firing was successful, and the target was destroyed, it would signal the turnover of control to the Cubans and the withdrawal of most of the Soviet SAM personnel. (SECRET)

2. Vietnam: The Viet Cong are maintaining heavy pressure on government forces in the Delta. Some of the recent attacks have been within 10 miles of Saigon and an increasing number of them occurred during daylight hours when the Viet Cong are most vulnerable. (CONFIDENTIAL)

3. Laos: The internal situation remains highly unstable following the breakdown of the tripartite discussions at the Plaine des Jarres and the ensuing right-wing military coup attempt in Vientiane on 19 April. There is a danger of further precipitate action by right-wing elements. (SECRET)

Thus far, there has been no discernible reaction from the Communists, other than the expected propaganda, and they probably consider it to their advantage to maintain a wait-and-see attitude. If the coalition government should collapse or be removed, the Communists may move to establish a separate "liberation" government. There have been a number of reports since last December that the Pathet Lao and dissident neutralists have made plans, with Chinese Communist and North Vietnamese backing, for the establishment of such a government in Phong Saly Province should the Souvanna government collapse or become too closely committed to the right-wing faction. We have noted a number of other Communist moves in recent months which could enable the Communists to exploit a collapse of the coalition government. (SECRET)

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**TOP SECRET**AFNINDC, TSC-320-64  
Hq., USAFWATCH REPORT  
of the  
UNITED STATES INTELLIGENCE BOARD

No. 714

29 April 1964

Conclusions

No Communist country intends to initiate direct military action in the immediate future against the United States, its overseas forces or its Allies. (SECRET)

Laos: The internal situation remains highly unstable. At the same time, Pathet Lao forces have begun to take advantage of the confusion and further Communist military action appears likely. (TOP SECRET)

Bloc International Developments

The Chinese Communists are unlimbering for a new major anti-Soviet polemic. On 27 April the Chinese Communists reprinted the Suslov report, the CPSU resolution and the 3 April Pravda editorial attacking the Chinese leadership--Peiping's usual preparation for a heavy counterattack. These anti-Chinese documents were introduced by a lengthy and sarcastic editorial note which promised further Chinese refutation of Soviet "lies, sophistry and abuse" and taunted the USSR over its inability to supply either a rebuff or a joint condemnation of China. We have noted that the Rumanian Party Central Committee has demonstrated a remarkable degree of independence in a resolution published in Scinteia on 26 April proposing again a cessation of Sino-Soviet polemics and further efforts at a negotiated solution. (CONFIDENTIAL)

Soviet Bloc Military Developments

In East Germany, Soviet military activity appears concentrated on preparations for the annual demonstrations and displays held during May in the Letzlinger Heide training area, which may be longer in duration this year than usual. (SECRET)

A marked drop in training activity by Soviet Bloc military forces is expected over the forthcoming May Day holidays. (SECRET)

Critical Areas

1. Cuba: A 22 April Izvestiya "Observer" article has reiterated previous Soviet warnings that the USSR will "side with Cuba" if the latter is subject to an external

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29 April 1964

attack, but avoided any commitment to specific Soviet countermeasures in such an event. The article also asserted that Cuba has the "inalienable right" to take the "necessary measures to put an end to the intrusion of foreign warplanes into its airspace." The article may herald a propaganda and diplomatic campaign intended to arouse international alarm over the US overflights. The Soviets and Cubans may hope that agitation of the issue would in itself induce the US to eventually curtail or terminate these flights. (SECRET)

2. Vietnam: The Viet Cong are increasing their pressure against government forces in the Delta area and in the region around Saigon. The pattern of attacks and of sabotage actions against lines of communications suggests a Communist effort to isolate district and provincial centers. (SECRET)

Our cumulative evidence suggests that the Communists are working steadily to improve their capabilities for expanded and sustained military operations. Recently available information indicates expansion in recent months of some facilities associated with infiltration routes through Laos--specifically a staging area in North Vietnam on Route 12 near the Laos border, and another staging area at Ben Thay on Route 9 in southern Laos. (SECRET)

3. Laos: The internal crisis remains unresolved. (CONFIDENTIAL)

Communist attacks against FAR and neutralist positions in eastern Xieng Khouang Province have increased sharply since 26 April, although Kong Le's main positions in the Plaine des Jarres area do not seem immediately threatened. Prior to the coup, there had been indications that the Communists were improving their capabilities for attacks in Xieng Khouang Province. A buildup of Communist strength has been under way in the Tha Thom area southeast of Xieng Khouang town for several weeks and Communist attacks in this area are also possible at any time. In addition, the Communists have succeeded in reopening Route 7 from North Vietnam, and heavy convoy movement over this road was reported in early and mid-April. (SECRET)

In south-central Laos, truck convoys have been reported over routes leading toward Tchepone and Muong Phine. (SECRET)

Within the past several weeks, there have been a number of unconfirmed reports suggesting an increased Chinese Communist military presence in Laos. Some Chinese Communist military personnel are reported to have arrived in Nam Tha and Phong Saly Provinces during February and March. We now have unconfirmed reports of the presence of Chinese military personnel in Xieng Khouang Province. We are unable, on the basis of present information, to determine the numbers or mission of these personnel. (SECRET)

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**TOP SECRET**AFNINDC, TSC-373-64  
Hq., USAF**WATCH REPORT  
of the  
UNITED STATES INTELLIGENCE BOARD**

No. 717

20 May 1964

Conclusions

No Communist country intends to initiate direct military action in the immediate future against the United States, its overseas forces or its Allies. (TOP SECRET)

Laos: The Communist capture of the Plaine des Jarres and other positions in southeastern Xieng Khouang Province will place them in control of almost all of Laos except for the Mekong Valley. We believe that current Communist operations will stop short of attacks against major positions in the Mekong Valley. We believe, however, the Communists can bring to bear the necessary forces to accomplish their objectives involving ultimate control of Laos at times generally of their own choosing. In our judgment, the primary limiting factor is their desire to avoid escalation by stimulating US counteractions. The Communists can be expected to proceed at a calculated pace within this frame of reference with their program. (TOP SECRET)

Bloc International Developments

The Soviet Union has focused specific attention during the past week on its support of "national liberation" struggles. In Egypt, Khrushchev has repeated standard Soviet statements of support for revolutionary movements in colonial areas. The Soviet Ambassador in Hanoi at a press conference there restated the Soviet pledge of support for North Vietnam's aims in South Vietnam. Simultaneously, Soviet propaganda media have carried a number of statements on Cuba, condemning alleged US backing of Cuban exiles, linking the U-2 overflights to these exiles, and reminding the West of the still vague Soviet defense commitment to Cuba. (CONFIDENTIAL)

The Rumanian regime reportedly has been conducting an unprecedented anti-Russian campaign among the populace within the past week. The campaign may presage new steps by Bucharest to demonstrate Rumanian independence and will further complicate Soviet relations with other Communist countries. The campaign will arouse popular hope for liberalization, although the regime has given little indication of abandoning its hardline internal policies. (CONFIDENTIAL)

**TOP SECRET**

**TOP SECRET**

20 May 1964

**Soviet Bloc Military Developments**

Soviet air operations during the past week included reconnaissance flights against the USS Shangri-La in the North Atlantic on 15 May by four TU-95/BEARs and against the USS Midway in the North Pacific on 17 May by six BISONs. In both instances fighters from the US aircraft carriers intercepted and escorted the Soviet heavy bombers while they were in the area. This represents a resumption of reconnaissance flights after several months' lapse. (SECRET)

Activity in the Group of Soviet Forces, Germany, has been at a low level since the May Day holidays. It now appears that the annual demonstrations in the Letzlinger Heide area, normally conducted during May, were concluded on 28 April and were more limited in scope than in previous years. We have as yet no indications as to the reasons for this change. (SECRET)

**Critical Areas**

1. Cuba: The recent delivery of from 10 to 20 additional missile canisters and associated components to one SAM site in each of the three air defense sectors, as well as to the Siguanea site on the Isle of Pines, indicates that on-site support areas are being established in selected defense areas. We cannot exclude the possibility that some of these sites may also have been chosen for live practice firings during the coming weeks. (SECRET)

Both Soviet and Cuban propaganda is now linking the US high-altitude reconnaissance program to the exile raids by stating that the former provide detailed information on Cuban military installations which is used in planning and executing raids on Cuba. (CONFIDENTIAL)

2. Vietnam: Viet Cong activities are increasing again in number and severity after a gradual three-week decline, with an emphasis on armed attacks in the Delta and the area around Saigon. In the north along the low coastal plain, Viet Cong actions continue to consist principally of harassments and terrorism directed against the populace in the New Rural Life Hamlets. The coastal railroad continues to be a special target for Viet Cong sabotage. (SECRET)

We have noted several recent low-level reports indicating a possible buildup of Viet Cong forces in Tay Ninh Province, northwest of Saigon. Cambodian acquiescence in Viet Cong activity in Sray Rieng opposite the critical Tay Ninh area will further facilitate Communist operations there. (SECRET)

Note is also taken that the sizeable concentration of Viet Cong forces in Military Region V has experienced relatively limited military commitment to date. (SECRET)

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**TOP SECRET**A.FNINDC, TSC-394-64  
Hq., USAFWATCH REPORT  
of the  
UNITED STATES INTELLIGENCE BOARDCIA/NRG  
INTERNAL USE ONLY

No. 718

27 May 1964

Conclusion

No Communist country intends to initiate direct military action in the immediate future against the United States, its overseas forces or its Allies.

(TOP SECRET) [REDACTED]

Bloc International Developments

The USSR's general behavior on the international scene appears aimed at avoiding a direct confrontation with the US over current crises. Khrushchev's recent remarks on the issue of US overflights of Cuba are belligerent, and the Soviets have documented for the record a justification for a U-2 shootdown, but at present this appears designed as pressure to deter the US from overflights. (SECRET)

[REDACTED]

Soviet Bloc Military Developments

The tempo of training within Bloc ground force elements in Eastern Europe is beginning to rise. Large-scale movements to the field for field training exercises are now anticipated with the level of training increasing as the summer training cycle gets under way. (SECRET)

Critical Areas

1. Vietnam: There has been no discernible change in the pattern of Viet Cong military activities. A few small-scale attacks have been reported recently, but terrorism and road sabotage continue to predominate. (SECRET)

Recent aerial photography of truck concentrations and traffic along Route 12 in North Vietnam toward south-central Laos suggests some increase in the southward flow of Communist personnel and/or supplies from North Vietnam along Route 12. (SECRET) [REDACTED]

2. Laos: Continuing Communist pressure will probably be directed against neutralist forces north of the Plaine des Jarres and appears to indicate an attempt

**TOP SECRET**

**TOP SECRET**

27 May 1964

to eliminate the Kong Le troops from Route 7 and open the route westward. South of the Plaine des Jarres, the Pathet Lao also are continuing attacks against Meo guerrilla bases in an attempt to eliminate the major remaining source of opposition to Communist control of Xieng Khouang Province. (SECRET)

There are reports of Communist movements in southern Laos which could indicate preparations for action in the Attapeu and Saravane areas. (SECRET)

The Communist nations have laid the propaganda groundwork for a withdrawal of recognition from the Souvanna government by their repeated statements that the coalition government is disintegrating, and Souphanouvong has reportedly threatened that the Communist nations may break relations with Vientiane. (CONFIDENTIAL)

The French call for the reconvening of the Geneva conference on Laos, which was promptly endorsed by Moscow, has been followed by a proposal from Peiping that the conference be held in Cambodia in June. None of the proposals have acknowledged Souvanna's conditions for a conference or included provisions for a cease-fire. All proposals, however, have been made in such a context as to leave room for consideration of all Indochina as well as Laos. The North Vietnamese and Pathet Lao attitudes toward a conference are not yet known. (CONFIDENTIAL)

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**TOP SECRET**A.FNINDC, TSC-394-64  
Hq., USAFWATCH REPORT  
of the  
UNITED STATES INTELLIGENCE BOARD

No. 718

27 May 1964

Conclusion

No Communist country intends to initiate direct military action in the immediate future against the United States, its overseas forces or its Allies.  
(TOP SECRET) [REDACTED]

Bloc International Developments

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[REDACTED]

Soviet Bloc Military Developments

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Critical Areas

1. Vietnam: There has been no discernible change in the pattern of Viet Cong military activities. A few small-scale attacks have been reported recently, but terrorism and road sabotage continue to predominate. (SECRET)

Recent aerial photography of truck concentrations and traffic along Route 12 in North Vietnam toward south-central Laos suggests some increase in the southward flow of Communist personnel and/or supplies from North Vietnam along Route 12. (SECRET) (NOFORN EXCEPT BRITISH AND CANADIANS)

2. Laos: Continuing Communist pressure will probably be directed against neutralist forces north of the Plaine des Jarres and appears to indicate an attempt

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*(Administrative - Internal Use Only)*

39058

2 March 1998

MEMORANDUM FOR: Mary Lou Cummings  
DCI/IRO

FROM: J. Barry Harrelson  
Senior Reviewer, HRP

SUBJECT: CIA-IR-23, Watch Reports of the U.S.  
Intelligence Board

1. We have reviewed the Watch reports provided pursuant to referent request. Likewise an ARRB staff member has also reviewed the documents.

2. Attached is the proposed ARRB memorandum concerning what was search and what was found. In addition, the staff member has proposed that those portions of the reports which are not related to the Kennedy assassination be declared NBR and redacted as the reports are processed for release by HRP. Also attached is HRP' memorandum in response to the request.

3. Kathy Dyer reviewed the ARRB draft memorandum on 24 February and passed on its content as unclassified. In addition, Kathy agreed to a redaction process with respect to the reports which would leave in the headings of all paragraphs despite the redaction of the whole paragraph.

4. Would you please review both the ARRB and HRP memoranda and concur with same or advise if changes need to be made. In addition, do you have any problem with the plan to leave in all paragraph headings?

5. Thank you for your assistance on this request.

*[Signature]*  
J. Barry Harrelson

*[Mary Lou] called back @ 1150 3 MAR; said she had talked w/ Kathy Dyer and now could say she had no objection to our draft memo unclassified. Also said she would be out rest of day and not back until Thursday. MB 3 MAR 98*

file cy

CIA SPECIAL COLLECTIONS  
RELEASE IN FULL  
2000

2 March 1998

MEMORANDUM FOR: T. Jeremy Gunn, Esq.  
Executive Director, ARRB

FROM: J. Barry Harrelson  
Senior Reviewer, HRP

SUBJECT: CIA-IR-23, Watch Reports of the U.S.  
Intelligence Board

1. This is responsive to subject request.
2. The Agency has made a concerted search of its records for the records requested via CIA-IR-23. The results of that search are in the form of a number of Watch Reports for the period 27 November 1963 through 27 May 1964. The reports have been reviewed by a member of the ARRB staff and a number of paragraphs were found which contained information somewhat related to the assassination story.
3. The Agency has agreed to include the reports within the materials being processed for release to the National Archives.
4. Accordingly, it is believed that this request is complete. If you have any questions about our handling of the reports, please advise.

  
J. Barry Harrelson

**MEMORANDUM**

March 3, 1998

To: **Jeremy Gunn**  
**Executive Director**

CIA INTERNAL SECURITY  
DECLASSIFICATION REVIEW  
RELEASE OF INFORMATION  
IN THIS DOCUMENT

cc: **Bob Skwirot**  
**CIA Team Leader**

From: **Michelle Combs** *Michelle Combs*  
**Special Assistant for Research and Review**

Subject: **CIA-IR-23 Watch Reports of the United States Intelligence Board**

In response to ARRB's informal request for additional information and records CIA-IR-23, CIA has searched the records of the National Intelligence Program Evaluation Staff (NIPE), including the United States Intelligence Board Watch Reports, action memorandums, meeting minutes, and chronological files for the period January 1963 to May 1964 for information relating to the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

The search produced eight United States Intelligence Board Watch Reports from the period 27 November 1963 to 27 May 1964. I have reviewed these eight documents consisting of 14 pages and have marked portions of six reports as assassination records: 27 November 1963, 24 December 1963, 22 January 1964, 22 April 1964, 29 April 1964, and 20 May 1964.

Like the President's Intelligence Checklist and the President's Daily Brief, these documents cover multiple topics. I recommend that the portions of the document not believed to be relevant to the Kennedy assassination be declared NBR and redacted.

Once the six marked reports have been included for processing as assassination records, this response is complete.



**DRAFT****DRAFT****Memorandum**

February 9, 1998

CIA HAS NO OBJECTION TO  
DECLASSIFICATION AND/OR  
RELEASE OF CIA INFORMATION  
IN THIS DOCUMENT**To:** Jeremy Gunn  
Executive Director**cc:** Bob Skwirot  
CIA Coordinator**From:** Michelle Combs  
Special Assistant for Research and Review**Subject:** CIA-IR-23 Watch Reports of the United States Intelligence Board

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Once the six marked reports have been included for processing as assassination records, this response is complete.

**DRAFT**



**Assassination Records Review Board**  
 600 E Street NW • 2nd Floor • Washington, DC 20530  
 (202) 724-0088 • Fax: (202) 724-0457

December 18, 1997

Mr. John Pereira  
 Chief  
 Historical Review Group  
 Center for the Study of Intelligence  
 Central Intelligence Agency  
 Washington, D.C. 02505

CIA HAS NO OBJECTION TO  
 DECLASSIFICATION AND/OR  
 RELEASE OF CIA INFORMATION  
 IN THIS DOCUMENT

Re: Status of CIA Responses to Assassination Records Review Board's Requests for  
 Additional Information and Records

Dear John:

I am writing to follow-up on our telephone call earlier today and to convey my serious concern about the status of CIA's responses to the Review Board's requests for additional information and records. Although CIA has completed its responses to several requests, and many others have been answered in part, a significant number of requests have not been answered — including some that were made more than two years ago. On many occasions we have been assured that responses would be forthcoming, only to have promised dates come and go without answers. It is now extremely important that these requests be answered promptly so that we may conduct a proper follow-up if necessary. The issues that we can now identify as being of the highest priority are identified in the text below by double asterisks (\*\*)<sup>1</sup> and we request that they be answered within the next month. We request that the remaining requests be answered by April 1, 1998.

The remainder of this letter is divided into two parts: first, a listing of the formal requests for information and records, and second, a listing of the informal requests for information and records. Please let me know if your understanding of any of the following points differs from ours so that we can resolve any potential discrepancies.

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<sup>1</sup>As identified more fully below, the issues are: CIA-1 Organizational Material, CIA-6 Cables and Dispatches, CIA-13 Backchannel Communications, CIA-IR-03 HTLINGUAL Documents, CIA-IR-04 Disposition of Angleton Files, CIA-IR-07 Claude Barnes Capehart, CIA-IR-15 Electronic "take" from Mexico City, CIA-IR-21 DRE Monthly Operational Reports, CIA-IR-22 "A" Files on Clay Shaw and Jim Garrison.

Mr. John Pereira  
December 18, 1997  
Page 12

**\*\*CIA-IR-22 "A" File on Clay Shaw and Jim Garrison.**

In July 1997, the ARRB staff was shown an "A" file on Clay Shaw which predated a 201 file. We were also told that an "A" file on Jim Garrison also existed. The Shaw file was declared to be an assassination record and it was our understanding that both files were to be sent to HRG for processing. We have not yet received confirmation from HRG that the files are in process as assassination records.

**CIA-IR-23 Watch Committee Files.**

In his memoirs, George Ball reports that upon first hearing of the shots in Dallas he called DCI John McCone and asked him to activate the Watch Committee. McCone replied that he already had. The Review Board requests the files of the Watch Committee for the period January 1963-May 1964.

**CIA-IR-24 Defector File.**

The ARRB staff has identified documents on Lee Harvey Oswald from the Office of Security's "Defector File." It is our understanding that these documents are now being processed as assassination records. No further tasking on this subject is anticipated.

**CIA-IR-25 Zapruder Film.**

The Board has requested any and all records, not previously located in the Sequestered Collection, on any handling by the CIA of the Zapruder film. In particular, we are interested in any records of NPIC's handling of the Zapruder film or copies of the Zapruder film in November and December 1963. Any log books or indexes which would indicate the individuals involved in the processing and handling of any assassination films should be included in this request.

**CIA-IR-26 Jordan James Pfuntner.**

The Review Board requested that a complete search for any records on this individual be undertaken, including a search of the Interagency Source Register. The ARRB staff provided HRG with additional identification data on this individual. The Review Board seeks a full and accurate formal response to this